

A Taiko Gala

Our annual concert celebrating the ceremonial drumming of Japan, featuring

Dublin Taiko Group



Saturday, April 15, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.



Dublin Jerome High School



SIX JAPANESE SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS
ONE UNIQUE COLUMBUS DESTINATION



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2022-2023 Season Snapshots



太鼓

Tai - ko

“drum”

Taiko is a Japanese drum ensemble that encompasses music and choreographed movements. It embodies both cultural awareness and beautiful art.

During the 2004-2005 school year, twenty Davis Middle School students under director Susann Blair-Ewing (Dublin City Schools) were introduced to Taiko during a year-long residency with master Taiko performer Eitetsu Hayashi, through a visiting artist program with the Dublin Arts Council. Sensei Susann Blair-Ewing's love of the art of Taiko led her to establish Dublin Taiko so students in 6th through 12th grades could continue to learn and practice this art.

In our 19-year history, Dublin Taiko Group performers have appeared at community events and cultural festivals throughout Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, West Virginia, Florida and Japan. They were the featured performers for the 2017 UK Taiko Festival in Exeter, England, and have performed twice by invitation at Walt Disney World.

What twenty earnest students and one devoted teacher started nineteen years ago has blossomed into a dedicated group of student performers who demonstrate a passion for the artistry of Taiko, and promote diversity and expansion of cultural knowledge in our community through performances at local events and festivals.



Susann Blair-Ewing

Susann Blair-Ewing is in her 28th year as the director of bands at Ann Simpson Davis Middle School, and Woodwind Specialist for the Dublin Scioto High School attendance area in Dublin, Ohio. She has been awarded the Golden Shamrock Award for Excellence in Education by Dublin City Schools. Mrs. Blair-Ewing directs concert and jazz band in grades 6 through 8, as well as teaching a music for special learners class in all three grades.

Susann's private saxophone lesson students have consistently received only Superior and Excellent ratings at Ohio Music Education Association Solo and Ensemble Festivals. Mrs. Blair-Ewing's concert and jazz ensembles have received no lower than an Excellent rating at OMEA, Music Showcase, and Music in the Parks Adjudicated Festivals for the past 25 years. Her ensembles have also been awarded Best Junior High Ensemble for 15 of those years.

Susann also directs four Taiko (Japanese) Drumming ensembles of sixth through twelfth-grade students after school, two days a week. Her Taiko groups have performed in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, West Virginia, Florida, and Japan; and traveled to the UK in June of 2017 for the 2017 UK Taiko Festival in Exeter, England.

Mrs. Blair-Ewing received her Bachelor's degree in 1994 from Morehead State University, in Morehead, Kentucky, where she was a saxophone major and oboe minor. Susann has served two terms as President of Ohio Music Educators Association District 15. She has also served on the executive board as the Region 3 Representative, the National Secretary and the National President of The American School Band Directors Association. Susann was recently inducted into the Phi Beta Mu fraternity for band directors in Ohio.

Mrs. Blair-Ewing has traveled and performed in Hawaii, Italy, Ireland and Scotland. Susann has also been guest conducting for many years. Her resume includes three-time conductor of the youngest band at the Wooster Music Camp, Wooster, Ohio, as well as conductor of many festival bands in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky.



Benjamin Pachter

Benjamin Pachter, Assistant Director of Dublin Taiko, is a nonprofit administrator, educator, and musician.

He received his Ph.D in ethnomusicology from the University of Pittsburgh, focusing on taiko performance in the United States and Japan. His dissertation, for which he conducted research around the world, explores the development and lineages of contemporary taiko repertoire and performance practices.

In his day job, Ben is Executive Director of the Japan-America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO), a Dublin-based nonprofit dedicated to fostering the Ohio-Japan relationship.

Ben lives in Dublin with his wife Tanya, their sons Oliver and Remy, their dogs Puggy and Mops, and their cat Misty.





Sydney Lewis

Sydney Lewis is a 2022 Dublin Scioto High School graduate. She's been a member of Dublin Taiko for seven years, and has enjoyed spending the 2023 season there as an Assistant Director. Special highlights of her time in Taiko include: meeting and playing with renowned Taiko masters Eitetsu Hayashi (who mentored Mrs. Blair-Ewing),

Shoji Kameda (founder of contemporary Taiko group On Ensemble), and critically acclaimed Kenny Endo. She has also enjoyed being introduced to various parts of Ohio and having the opportunity to share Japanese drumming with others!

Sydney's hobbies include travel, music, and spending time with friends and family. Special interests include collecting, learning about different cultures, and pop culture. In addition to her love for Taiko, she has been a violist for 9 years and is in the process of teaching herself bagpipes. She also has a background in dance and has a black belt in Kung-Fu.

Sydney has a passion for helping others, which is a driving force behind why she's currently working towards obtaining a Bachelors in Psychology through a partnership with Columbus State Community College and Capital University. She will minor in Sociology and Political Science.

She currently resides in Dublin with her parents and two cats, Hocus and Pocus.

A Taiko Gala 2023 Performances

-- ACT ONE --

Sen No Kaikyo-Umi No Sho -- "Mother Sea Suite" from "Thousands of Waterways"

Composed by Eitetsu Hayashi

Performed by the Dublin Taiko Group JV and Honors Veterans

This piece was composed for a memorial event celebrating the port city of Kobe's recovery from the damages caused by a massive earthquake.

The world premiere of the piece was a huge success, performed by 1,000 drummers. It expresses the strength of the human spirit, persistence and the way that the people never gave up hope.

The song begins with the sound of the waves crashing on the shore, of volunteers' footsteps rushing to help, and the sound of people trying to stand up. It then goes on to the cheerful Matsuri Bashi with a kind shuffle beat.

Ikari no Kaminari -- "Rage of Thunder"

Composed by Eric Paton

Performed by Dublin Taiko Honors Beginners

Ikari no Kaminari was commissioned by Ballet Metropolitan of Columbus, Ohio, as the overture for a Jazz Ballet Premier in 1995.

Choreographers requested a piece for students 7-17 years old to perform on five-gallon buckets as the curtains rose at the Ohio Theater. Paton asked his twin, Stuart, to make synthetic taiko using traditional skins and 50-gallon plastic barrels to add an odaiko sound to the shime daiko-like buckets. Ikari has been performed by thousands of students.

Release

Composed by Diana Wu

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group

Drawing inspiration from the spirit of San Francisco Taiko Dojo, "Release" is a high energy, high intensity piece where performers find the confidence and courage to completely let go and bring their most powerful, most wild presence to the stage. In addition to the raw emotion of the piece, the choreography draws influence from wushu, a type of martial art; thus, the performers must constantly train their bodies to better execute the physical challenges of the piece, and yet, still maintain the musical and emotional elements. Naruwan Taiko's signature piece encourages each performer, as well as the audience, to reach into the deepest recesses of their energy source, collect their raw spirit, and release it all, through not only the taiko, but also with their voices and expression! Naruwan Taiko believes the sheer passion and strength of each performance, whether here today or another time, is a collective release of energy from both the Taiko group and its audience! So feel free to kiai!

Yodan Uchi

Composed by Sukeroku Taiko, Saboten arrangement

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group JV

"Yodan Uchi" translates to "Hitting Four Sides," referring to the fact that as the players circle around the drums in the latter half of the piece they hit four heads of three drums. It is based on "Nidan Uchi" (Hitting Two Sides) composed by Sukeroku Taiko - the first professional Taiko group - in the late 1960s when they looked to create a work that could be enjoyed by audiences surrounding the performers. It combines a number of performance styles, including the slanted stand festival drumming of Tokyo, festival drumming of the island of Hachijo, and even drum dances from South Korea.

Michi-wo Yukuhito -- "A Pilgrim on the Road"

Composed by Eitetsu Hayashi

Performed by Dublin Taiko Honors Veterans

This piece was composed in 1999, inspired by the historical 12th century pilgrimages to the Sacred Kumano Mountains. Kumano is located in a steep mountain range with beautiful waterfalls and was considered a sacred place to worship nature. For centuries, people took long journeys to Kumano, crossing dangerous waters and climbing steep hills. They did this with the belief that overcoming such hardships would make their wishes come true. In this piece, two people face the drum from each side as if they are facing the mountain, and sing excerpts from an ancient poem about the hardship of pilgrimage.

Omiyage

Composed by Shoji Kameda

Taught to the group by Masato Baba and Chris Bergstrom of TaikoProject, Los Angeles, California

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group

Omiyage in Japanese is most easily translated into "souvenir or gift." When visiting the country of Japan, it is customary to bring gifts to those you are visiting. Omiyage is the gift that TaikoProject has given to audiences through performance, and the gift that they have given to us through their workshop.

-- INTERMISSION --

-- ACT TWO --

Michinoku

Composed by Mitsuaki Sato, Arranged by Sousaku Wadaiko Komanokai

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group

After the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, this piece was first performed by “Sousaku Wadaiko Komanokai”—one of the pioneers of today’s taiko music—with taiko groups from the devastated coast area as part of their regular concert that same year. Additionally, every May 5th the song has been performed to pray for the children who lost their lives and for the recovery of their hometown as part of an event called Aoi Koinobori Project held in Omagarihama, Higashi Matsushima city. This piece has also been performed by taiko groups in Las Vegas, and each year continues to spread around the world.

Many players have performed this piece as a prayer for Tohoku, the region hardest hit by the 2011 earthquake. The score “Michinoku” was launched for sale on March 11th, 5 years after the earthquake. We believe that art and traditional performance is part of its heart and soul. Let’s play the sounds that bind us together, and dream that this piece will be performed as a prayer for those who lost their homes and loved ones, and hopes for a brighter future.

Yatai Bayashi

Arranged by Eitetsu Hayashi

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group JV

“Yatai Bayashi” is an arrangement of the festival music of the town of Chichibu, in Saitama Prefecture. Every year on the night of December 2-3, Chichibu hosts the Yo-Matsuri, or “night festival”, which showcases six towering and ornately decorated yatai (carts/floats) that are pulled through the narrow streets by hundreds of participants. From within each yatai comes the sounds of endless drumming and flute in order to please both the spirits channeled through the yatai and to keep the energy of the participants going.

Continued from previous page

As part of the famous Taiko group Ondekoza, Eitetsu Hayashi rearranged this festival music in 1971 for the international stage. His rearrangement has become an iconic part of modern taiko playing (so much that it is sometimes misinterpreted as traditional!) and versions are featured by countless groups around the world. Dublin Taiko first learned Yatai Bayashi in the spring of 2014.

Dirt Rhythms

Composed by Anton Lock of TaikoOZ, Sydney, Australia

Performed by Dublin Taiko Honors Veterans

This short piece of music enables participants to explore the relationship between taiko and movement. In *Dirt Rhythms*, the movement is heavily influenced by traditional sword dance from Iwate Prefecture in Japan.

Hiryu Sandan Gaeshi

Composed by Oguchi Daihachi, Founder of Osuwa Daiko in Nagano Prefecture

Performed by Dublin Taiko Honors Beginners

This piece means “Three revolutions on the Flame Dragon.” The three revolutions are believed to represent good luck, good health, and good harvest. The students will actually be making three dancing revolutions around the drum to signify this.



Umino Hojo-sho – “Abundance of the Ocean”

Composed by Eitetsu Hayashi

Performed by Dublin Taiko Seniors

In this piece, taiko are set up on both sides of the players, who beat them with large acrobatic movements. The image of a series of small islands lined up across the horizon of the Setonaikai Inland Sea is the inspiration for this piece. If you imagine the taiko drums to be the small islands, the drummers as bridges across the islands or as people who live on the islands, the piece embodies the abundance of resources and relationships between the Inland Sea, the islands, and the islanders' lives.

Senior Recognitions Sensei Susann Blair-Ewing

We would like to say farewell to our graduating seniors:

Olivia Allen	Lindsey Newport
Whitney Dunlap	Diya Rajan
Addison Haggerty	Tori Riddle
JP Heiserman	Amon Samblanet
Saoirse Hurley	Vikram Srikonda
Emma Jones	Liliana St. Germain
Esha Kanakia	Jack Szabo
	Oley Williams

We wish you well in all of your endeavors!

Sen No Kaikyo - Hikari no Sho – “Light Suite” from “Thousands of Waterways”

Composed by Eitetsu Hayashi

Performed by Dublin Taiko Group

The main theme of “Sen no Kaikyo” is played in a rapid and linear tempo in this suite. It is a good piece for intermediate drummers who have practiced the “Mother Sea” suite and are ready to be challenged at the next level. The piece is the finale of the suites and addresses the people whose lives are affected by natural disaster and who continue to move forward with hope. This movement requires powerful, spirited performance.

DUBLIN TAIKO

High school and Middle school students from Dublin City Schools

Susann Blair-Ewing, Sensei/Director

DUBLIN TAIKO GROUP

Camren Abel	Esha Kanakia*	Adam Schaaf
Olivia Allen*	Deeksa Kasirajan	Gabe Shaw
Brady Asbury	Daniel Kirchhoff	Vikram Srikonda*
Mio Awano	Alexis Neace	Briana St. Germain
Whitney Dunlap*	Ian Nelson	Liliana St. Germain*
Addison Haggerty*	Jeffrey Newport	Jack Szabo*
Skylar Heiser	Lindsey Newport*	Jonathan Timmons
JP Heiserman*	Kyrie Paez	Austin Toczynski
Saoirse Hurley*	Diya Rajan*	Hannah Wiesen
Emma Jones*	Tori Riddle*	Oley Williams*
	Amon Samblanet*	

*2023 Senior

DUBLIN TAIKO GROUP JV

*Performers with at least two years of Taiko experience
and are working towards membership in DTG*

Aubrey Abel	Eric Neill	Leo Sekiguchi
Gavin Jones	William Porter	Samuel Strohl
	Kaitlyn Rogers	

DUBLIN TAIKO HONORS VETERANS

Performers with at least one year of Taiko experience

Alaina Eddy
Isabella Haas
Aiden Haggerty
Colin Huh

Maya Ibrahim
Jack Lenehan
Finnegan Seiler
Luseane Tonga

Vijayragav Varadarajan
Efi Varveris
Michiko Weasner-Webb
Maxx Wenzel

DUBLIN TAIKO HONORS BEGINNERS

First-year Taiko performers

Taylor Alexander
Mason Badertscher
Anthony Booker
Colton Butler
Ella Chinn
Collin Coho
Collin Cook
Veronica Demertzis
Niko Demertzis

Aarush Gupta
Trinity Heisler
Chloe Huh
Athru Hurley
Sora Kojoma
Drew Kosto
Nayuta Matsuda
Selah Mosley
Chikako Ohshima
Karabo Omuferen
Katlego Omuferen

Carter Phillips
Arianna Rojas
Maria Romoli
William Sanders
Moiria Seiler
Cole Smith
Deacon Stevenson
Jake Toczynski
Anna Varveris



Dublin Taiko Seniors

Olivia Allen

My favorite taiko memory was going to London and Exeter with the group in 2017 and performing at the UK Taiko Festival.

I plan to go to college and study psychology in the fall.



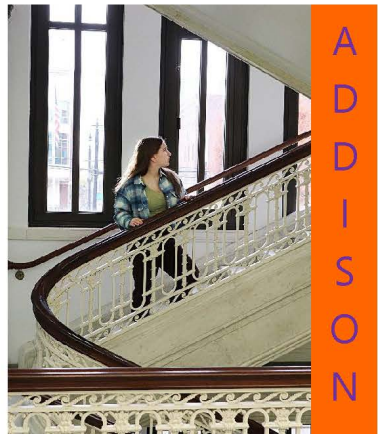
Whitney Dunlap

I had so much fun when Dublin Taiko participated in the music video with the drummer from Starset. It really put into perspective how following your dreams can be achievable.

I plan to major in biology at The Ohio State University. I want to go into genetic therapy, specifically specializing in fertility.

Addison Haggerty

My favorite taiko memory has and always will be Mrs. Ewing. She has encouraged me and lifted me up since I walked into my first practice. There was never a time when I didn't know that the middle school band room was a kind of refuge from the chaos that was being 13. Thank you, Mrs. Ewing, for helping me grow into the adult that I am today. After graduation, I am going to Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, to major in History and minor in Classical Studies.



JP Heiserman

My favorite Taiko memory would be making the music video with Adam Gilbert, the drummer for Starset.

I will be going to The Ohio State University and majoring in computer science.



Saoirse Hurley

My favorite taiko memory is coming to rehearsal in sixth grade and getting to play a solo I wrote for the first time. Everyone was very impressed, and it inspired me to push myself to share great things with my audience.

My current future plans (unfinalized) are to attend OSU majoring in bass performance.

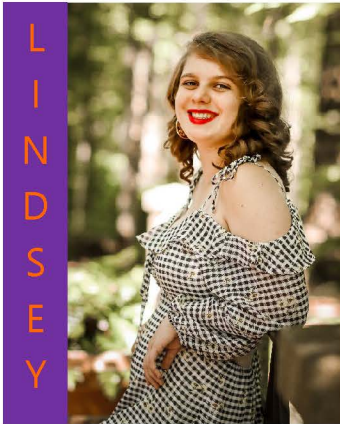
Emma Jones

My favorite taiko memories are right before the Gala, preparing with friends throughout the day. There's always so much excitement and anticipation, and we all come together during that time. Outside of Taiko I spend my time working and doing art. Next year I'm planning to attend Central Ohio Technical College for their ultrasound program.



Esha Kanakia

My favorite Taiko memory is after one of our performances, a bunch of us went to get milkshakes and hang out. We were young at the time, so it was fun having this little taste of freedom and we were having just as much fun as we're having now! My plan for the future is to go to OSU (could change) to major in Computer Science and minor in Business. If possible, I'd like to continue doing Taiko in college, but who knows what's in store for my future!



Lindsey Newport

I have enjoyed performing in Dublin Taiko for about 6 years. It would be impossible for me to pick just one memory to highlight. I have loved every performance I've done, and especially being able to play and learn from Eitetsu Hayashi, Shoji Kameda, Adam Gilbert, and most of all Susann Ewing. Thank you, Mrs. Ewing, for all the time and effort you put into everything, and for providing me with all the opportunities I've had.

Diya Rajan

I enjoyed performing at the Asian Festival last year! That was when I really got to know the people in Taiko and became friends with people who I hadn't had the chance to connect with before. We had a fun time trying to summon all the butterflies in Franklin Park Conservatory. I'm so glad I was able to be in DTG this year and able to meet all these amazing people!! Future plans: I'm going to be in Air Force ROTC; hopefully at Duke University, Ohio State, or the University of Washington. I am planning to double major in Political Science and Aerospace

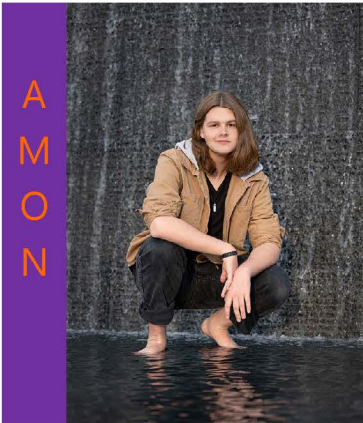


Tori Riddle

My favorite memory was performing at my first Taiko Gala (I felt so cool).

I plan to attend the University of Cincinnati for chemistry or mathematics.

Thank you to everyone who is taking the time to make the Gala special for seniors!



Amon Samblanet

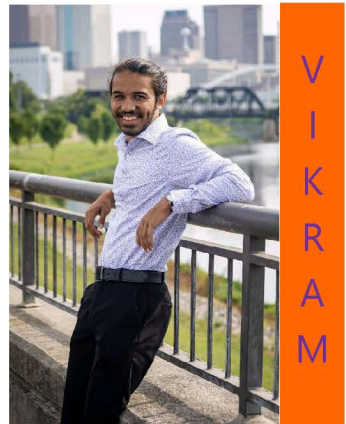
Favorite memory: Watching professional Taiko player, Kenny Endo, teach and perform. It was a great chance to see how a different group played Taiko, especially since they incorporated more instruments than the ones we typically use. My signed CD of Kenny's music still sits in my car.

We've worked with a lot of talented musicians and Taiko players, but Kenny Endo was definitely a standout. Future plans: I will be attending Ohio University in the fall of 2024, pursuing an education in Creative Writing/Screenwriting.

Vikram Srikonda

Favorite Taiko memory: Seeing Kenny Endo and his ensemble perform, and getting to ask them some questions. I was fascinated by the fusion of Taiko with Western musical influences in his compositions.

Future plans: As of right now, I intend to attend Fordham University in New York next year to study economics, and I hope to remain musically active through collegiate ensembles.



Liliana St. Germain

My favorite Taiko memory was last year's Taiko Gala. A bunch of us were dancing and air drumming while the other groups were playing. It was fun!

I am going to be attending Kent State in the fall pursuing a Chemistry degree with intents to be a pharmacist.

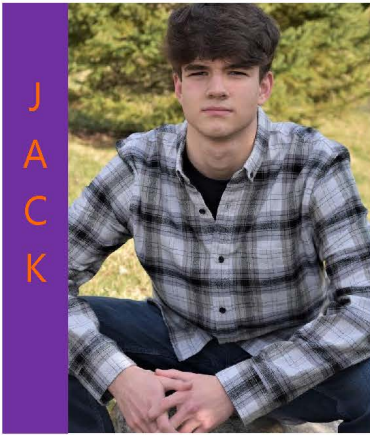


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Jack Szabo

Favorite Memory: Being all together with our arms completely dead after playing for hours for the music video with Adam Gilbert, the drummer for Starset.

Future plans: Going to Columbus State to study Business and Entrepreneurship.



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K

Oley Williams

My favorite Dublin Taiko memory is when Eitetsu Hayashi visited and we got to play with him at the Gala. I also really liked playing the Oh oh daiko with my brother.

My future plans are to go to The Ohio State University, major in Biochemistry and then work in the healthcare field.



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Shout Outs to our Taiko Performers!!

Congratulations!

We couldn't be more proud of all you have accomplished in Taiko!



We are so proud of you, Gabe!
Love,
Mom,
Dad and
Koel



Congratulations, Amon! Love you!
Mom, Dad and Nate



Love,
dedication &
determination
We love you &
are very proud
of you Lindsey



Congratulations!
We love you, Jack!
**Mom, Dad &
Maggie**



Addison,
Six years ago, we
could not have
imagined the
passion you
would develop
for Taiko.

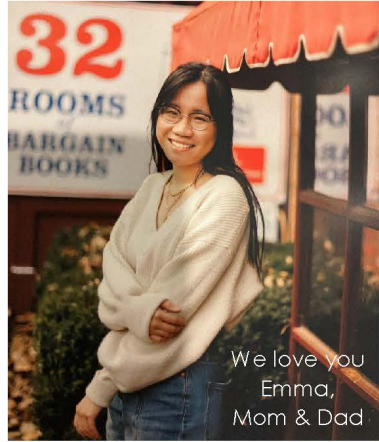
We are so proud
of the talent,
dedication, and
leadership you
have shown.

Love,
Mommy, Poppa,
Aiden and Isaiah



You are amazing and can do anything you want in life. You have always left us in awe of your many talents.

We are so proud of you, JP!
We love you!



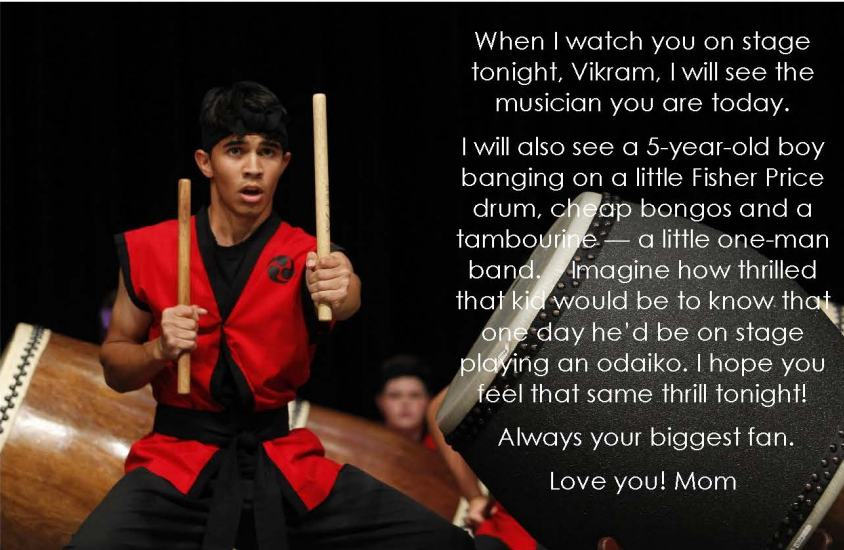
We love you
Emma,
Mom & Dad

When I watch you on stage tonight, Vikram, I will see the musician you are today.

I will also see a 5-year-old boy banging on a little Fisher Price drum, cheap bongos and a tambourine — a little one-man band. ... Imagine how thrilled that kid would be to know that one day he'd be on stage playing an odaiko. I hope you feel that same thrill tonight!

Always your biggest fan.

Love you! Mom





Congratulations Esha! We are so proud of your dedication to Dublin Taiko for last 6 years. We loved hearing you play and you were all amazing!



**Whitney, congratulations on your senior performance!
Love, Mom, Dad, and Riley**

You're *rockin* the drums and we're so proud of you!

Keep working hard, William!

**Love,
Mom & Dad**



Niko & Veronica, we are so proud of how your commitment to Taiko has deepened and how your skills have grown this year!

Love you, Mama, Baba,
Philip, Pappou & Yiayia



Colton, we are so proud of you and all the hard work you have put into Taiko.

We love you and have fun!



Taylor,

We are so proud of the young lady you are becoming. Keep up the great work!

Love,
Your Family

Dublin Taiko Boosters

Sensei/Director	Susann Blair-Ewing
Assistant Sensei/Director	Benjamin Pachter
Assistant Director	Sydney Lewis
President	Karen Schaaf
Vice President	Eric Schaaf
Treasurer.....	Matthew Lenehan
Reporting Secretary	Jason Seiler
Corresponding Secretary	Mary-Helen "Mickey" Wiesen
Web Master	Jason Seiler

Cabinet

Gala Chairs	Lisa Nelson and Vika Tonga
Transportation	Tobin Strohl
Social Media Coordinator.....	Samantha Strohl
Performance Coordinator.....	Samantha Strohl
Uniforms	Wendy Timmons
Spiritwear/Merchandise	Michael and Tammy Newport

2023 Gala Committee

Program	Susan Srikonda
VIP Invitations	Amanda Haggerty
Volunteer Coordinator	Allison Coho
Meal Coordinator	Terry St. Germain
Raffle & 50/50 Coordinator	Indu Rajan
Photo Coordinator	Tafe Tonga

Dublin Taiko Boosters would like to give special thanks to:

The parents of the performers who provide transportation, volunteer their time, and support Mrs. Blair-Ewing and the students in many ways.

The administration and staff at Davis Middle School, led by principals Dr. Jamie Stewart, Jason Snyder, and Kevin Masteron, for the support that has kept Taiko an active part of the Davis experience for the last 19 years.

Special thank you to the Market District for your support

Market

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upcoming performance and news.*



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